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National Advertising Representative
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Friday, February 8, 1946

Placing the Veteran

A businessman posed a question the other day which will arise with disturbing frequency. This employer said:

"I am in a state of perplexity. Soon to return to my establishment will be a discharged serviceman. He was a lieutenant commanding infantry. He fought in and won some battles. When he worked for me, he was fresh out of school. I employed him in a minor capacity, that of an office boy at a salary of eighteen dollars a week. So far as I know that was—and is—the only work around my business for which he has had experience. Under existing law he is entitled to, and I owe him, his job. What to do? The job of office boy no longer is appropriate for this young man after his military career."

An expert in job placement probably would counsel the businessman to offer the former serviceman something superior to the position of office boy. After all, if he could lead infantry he certainly had qualifications reflecting ability to shoulder responsibility and executive tasks.

But fundamentally, the issues lie deeper. The problem is not one of merely engaging another hand around the office or the factory or the farm. And particularly, it is imprudent to peg an ex-serviceman purely to his prewar pursuits. In almost every instance the armed forces gave their personnel experience in the field of leadership, initiative, teamwork, new trades and new ideas. These apply to the coming era. The army clerk can administer an office. The navy machinist is handy at tooling. The air corps crewman is familiar with motors. The confident Marine learned how to use a rifle; he can learn salesmanship.

The qualities attractive to an employer are there. They can be brought out and developed by interview, by examination of employment registration cards, by personal appraisals. There are agencies to assist the employer, such as accredited employment offices and bona fide veterans organizations as the local American Legion post.

Looking at the situation externally, an adequate armed force is good insurance for national security. The internal situation must be equally sound. And the placement of veterans is essential to a healthful economy in the community as well as the Nation as a whole. The rate of discharge of members of the armed forces is increasing. The absorption of these men and women into gainful occupations must keep pace. This not only is our fulfillment of a sacred contract but provision for our mutual welfare and progress.

The Lesson of Centuries

The editor of a New Jersey paper states, "I am 100 per cent in favor of private enterprise and opposed to socialism. However, several of my readers have asked me the question, 'What are we going to do to make a living?' They say that manufacturing industries and business offices will not hire them because they are over 50 years old, and that several industries will not take on any people who are over 35 years old."

This editor asks what can be done to correct such a situation, and says: "How can we fight the isms if industry and business encourage a background that creates votes for them?"

The persons who have asked this editor to give them an answer to this question start off on the assumption that socialism can do what industry and business cannot do, and that therefore it is desirable as a substitute for any current shortcomings in business.

The record over the centuries has been that government is not a good provider. When given monopolistic power, it always becomes an oppressor.

If industry is refusing to hire older people who want to work, industry must correct that situation in its own self interest. And that can be brought about by the proper agencies cooperating with industry and making it possible for it to hire older people to do such work as they are capable of doing.

Industry should take the lead in correcting this situation. On the other hand, government cannot block industry by laws which allow no elasticity in employment and which do not allow the employer to exercise some judgment of his own in determining the character and kind of work and the pay that can be given, based on the productivity of the employe, always assuming that there be a fair minimum wage.

How much better such a procedure would be than a program to substitute socialism for private enterprise and private employment, thereby making government the master and an individual the slave of a total monopoly.

The New Jersey editor has raised a good point. The problem can be solved by cooperation between industry, government and the people.

America and the American People

The recent annual meeting of the American Coalition Society in Washington served to emphasize the fact that it is up to the United States to stand by its own guns, and show less fear of being shot by the diplomatic firearms that are displayed threateningly by some of the tough guys in the United Nations Organization. Speakers included United States Senators, and former members of the Senate. Those gentlemen stood back of President John B. Trevor of the American Coalition, who had explained that his cooperative organization is opposed to the so-called British loan, and is also against the Brenton-Woods agreements.

There was frank and straight-to-the-shoulder opposition to Cordell Hull's Reciprocal Trade policies.

The organization has gone on record against lowering immigration restrictions, and letting in a flood of people from the worn-out countries of the World as they would complicate already seriously confused conditions. In short, this group of societies stands for "America First" and views with grave concern the insistence by Russia in taking over control of countries it has no right to possess.

"The people who sponsored the United Nations, the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms cannot correctly justify the re-establishment of an imperial regime under European domination" declared President Trevor in reflecting the feeling of the American Coalition, and in declaring for "an American policy for the American people."

NOT TOO HOT NOT TOO COLD

Forgotten Men?

There is reassurance in the knowledge that, with hostilities now well over, the men who suffered wounds or illness in winning the victory are not forgotten. We have ample evidence that every effort is being put forth not only to hasten physical recovery but to bring about complete rehabilitation in mind and morale, and the knowledge that they are not forgotten doubtless is a strong contributing factor in restoring assurance and confidence to any man who suffered permanent injuries in conflict or who have become discouraged during necessarily slow convalescence.

Medical and Army and Navy authorities recognize the value of endeavors which serve as diversions from the regular routine. One such project to which they pay high tribute is the model car design competition now being conducted among hospitalized service men by the Fisher Body Craftsman's Guild. This General Motors educational foundation is enrolling hospitalized service men in a project which combines creative thinking with handicraft. The men design and build their own model cars, and to make it additionally worthwhile the Craftsman's Guild is offering $20,000 in awards to those who make the best models.

General Omar Bradley, administrator of Veterans Affairs, has said that "activities of this nature are a modern and direct approach to the problem of rehabilitation." He added that in the anticipated expansion of occupational therapy programs the building of model cars might well have a place.

Edward N. Scheiberling, retiring commander of the American Legion sees the Craftsman's Guild program as "a most worthy project—but even worthier is the thought behind the project, that America is remembering her disabled heroes and that this memory extends into the halls of industry." Mr. Scheiberling, noting that our Army was the most mechanized the world has ever known, believes that the service men "may well contribute something worthwhile in new design to industry."

Now It's Fuel Oil

The country seems headed for a fuel oil shortage. Again, as in butter and countless other commodities, the reason goes back to stalled adjustments in prices. OPA ceilings encouraged gasoline production during the war, at the expense of heating fuels. The Mayor of New York has frankly stated that a price increase for fuel oil is necessary. A spokesman for one of the largest refiners and distributors in the East says that, "An increase in fuel oil prices would undoubtedly promote a larger output."

Thus our era of regulated shortages continues. As long as free enterprise exists, the natural tendency will be to produce those things that result in a reasonable degree of profit. OPA has neglected to recognize that the war is over. Millions of consumers need oil in other forms than gasoline. Few [illegible] would have recognized changing requirements months ago.

What to Do When Fire Strikes

If you should awaken at night with the acrid fumes of smoke biting your nostrils and suddenly realize that your house was on fire, what would you do? Unless you know what to do, and do it quickly, you and your family may die within the next few minutes. To avoid such tragedies, fire safety experts are promoting the adoption of fire drills in homes.

The details of fire drills in individual families will vary widely with circumstances, but the following suggestions are helpful in the general planning: (1) Insure the safety of everyone in the building. (2) Turn in a fire alarm. (3) Fight the fire, if suitable fire extinguishing equipment is available.

The first suggestion means devising and practicing safe methods of escape from upper bedrooms when halls and stairways are cut off by flames and smoke. The first rehearsal drill may reveal conditions that require changes in domestic arrangements. Perhaps an invalid is sleeping in the room that is less accessible from the outside, or a baby is in a room that could not be reached if the main hall were cut off. If a hazardous condition cannot be corrected, the occupant of the room should be taught to jump only as a last resort. As a rule, firemen will reach the scene before this is necessary.

After safety of occupants has been assured, the next step is to turn in the alarm, preferably at a fire alarm box.

If an attempt is made to use extinguishing equipment, always remember to stand where there is a safe avenue of escape; maintain a position where smoke and flames will be blown away from you; clear the air in the room immediately after extinguishing the fire.

The above suggestions may save your life someday—don't forget them.

Farmers Face Inflation

Washington has been warned by editorial writers that as labor raises wages in the cities, farm labor will fade away from farms. Farmers will have to raise wages in order to compete with the cities. This will increase the cost of production of food. Naturally, just as soon as food prices go up, labor will come in for more wage increases, based upon the cost of living. So there's a kind of inflation that people haven't been figuring on. Don't get the notion that there is going to be any quick return to "normalcy."

Marriage In Rush

Marriage licenses issued in cities of the first class throughout the United States increased 32 per cent in 1945 as compared with the previous year. And the rate for 1946 is better still. Naturally the Census Bureau lays matrimonial speed to the war.

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